

I. INTRODUCTION

This position is located in the Meat Grading and Certification Branch, Livestock and Seed Division. The branch provides Federal grading and certification services for meat and meat products which is conducted voluntarily, and is financially self-supporting. These grading and certification services fulfill an important economic need of the livestock and meat industry by facilitating the nationwide identification and marketing of meat and meat food products.

The incumbent of this position performs a variety of meat grading and quality assurance monitoring duties, located at either a regional office, area office, other office locations which may involve details and/or reassignments to different geographical areas as needed and as determined by management.

II. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Examines and grades some, but not all, classes of meat (e.g., beef, veal, calf, lamb, yearling mutton, mutton, etc.) and substantially the full range within each grade of dressed meat carcasses and wholesale cuts at establishments to which assigned. Interprets, maintains, and applies official standards.

Examines beef either in carcass or wholesale cut form to evaluate the sex, texture, marbling, maturity, color, and other factors related to quality. Applies the official standards to determine the meat's quality grade. Reserves the more difficult borderline cases for determination by a senior grader or receives technical assistance in making the determinations. May perform grading work involving products which are new or unusual to the employee under the direct instruction and guidance of a senior grader.

Determines the yield grade of carcasses considering such factors as carcass weight, amount of fat, and area of ribeye. Records and forwards evaluation data for the factors which determine the final quality and yield grade of specific carcasses identified for evaluation through the Carcass Data Service.

For meats and meat food products with which the employee is familiar, follows prescribed procedures in selecting samples and inspecting the products for compliance to contract specifications. Contracts primarily involve Federal, State, county, municipal agency and institution purchasing programs. The inspection typically includes examining for product defects, packaging, weight, product trim, and quantity. Consults a senior grader for guidance when particular specifications are new or unusual to the employee's experience.

Participates in giving public demonstrations and reviewing retail meat (i.e. supermarkets, meat markets, hotels, restaurants, etc.) for compliance of Public Law 272 and maintains permanent records related to their duties.

Corrects self-made errors and defends grade or certification determinations to plant personnel. However, may refer plant protests to senior graders for resolution (especially when the protest involves what could be considered a borderline case). Also, explains the application of standards, rules, and regulations to plant employees or management when necessary.

Is responsible for proper control and storage of official equipment.

Prepares and issues certificates of acceptance and may assist in compiling summary work reports.

III. EVALUATION FACTORS

1. Knowledge Required by the Position 750 points

Knowledge of the official standards, regulations and rules relevant to meats and meat products to grade both for quality and yield, and to examine products against common contract specifications, making most grade determinations without assistance (except for borderline or controversial determinations).

Knowledge of the characteristics, anatomical structure, types of cuts, and processing techniques for a limited variety of meats as these factors pertain to determining the grade or acceptability of the product.

Skill in sampling, examining, and grading and in maintaining interpersonal relationships with industry personnel to the extent required by the grader's responsibility in the area.

2. Supervisory Controls 125 points

The employee usually works under the direction of a supervisor and/or general guidance of a senior grader who coordinates the overall grading and certification work at the plant and who provides the assignments, usually on a daily basis.

Assignments involving products and procedures familiar to the employee are performed without specific instructions. In these situations the employee requires little technical assistance although a senior grader is normally available to aid with the more difficult problems. For assignments involving products or procedures less familiar to the employee, more complex instructions are provided, technical guidance is increased, and a senior grader assists more frequently in difficult or borderline cases. The employee resolves minor operating problems with plant employees concerning the plant's practices, procedures, or protests of gradings. However, a major or more

controversial problems in this area may be referred to a senior grader (or supervisor) for resolution.

The work is reviewed through spot-checks of grading and certification, and review of worksheets and certificates. The spot-checks are more frequent when less familiar products are involved.

3. Guidelines 125 points

Guides include the grade standards for the products involved in the work, the contract specifications for products under various purchasing programs, technical and procedural handbooks, manuals and bulletins, and oral instructions.

4. Complexity 150 points

The work consists of a variety of duties including sampling, quality grading, yield grading, examining for varying contract specifications, compiling beef carcass data, and inspecting for general compliance and storage requirements. The procedures and methods used vary according to the duty being performed, as do the pertinent factors to be considered.

The employee is typically rotated through several plants for developmental purposes. Overall (and as related to the employee's duties) the plants are within the average in terms of their scope of operational and technical complexity.

The work involves combining grade factors to arrive at an overall grade. In addition, the duties involve distinct products, product formulations, and contract acceptance programs. Duties also include monitoring aspects of processing for compliance with specification requirements.

5. Scope and Effect 150 points

The work involves making some final determinations of carcass grades or product acceptability. These determinations affect the product's market value and, consequently, the economic interests of producers, processors, wholesalers, and, in some cases, governmental agencies or institutions.

6. Personal Contacts 25 points

Contacts include other agricultural commodity graders, meat inspectors, other Federal and State Government personnel, consumers, and industry personnel such as company graders, department supervisors, and production managers.

7. Purpose of Contacts 120 points

The purpose is to develop and maintain the cooperation of plant employees, to explain grade determinations and agency policies and regulations, and to exchange information to plan and schedule work activities.

8. Physical Demands 50 points

Commodity grading work requires periods of physical exertion to lift and move boxes and cartons of product often weighing over 50 pounds; prolonged periods of standing, walking, stooping, bending, and climbing; physical coordination and finger dexterity in both hands to perform digital examinations of commodities; ability to detect abnormalities in the commodity through normal or corrected vision in at least one eye for distance, depth perception, and color; the ability to assure safety in a highly mechanized and/or noisy environment through adequate or correctable hearing; and the ability to determine product quality through sensory perception (taste, smell, etc.).

9. Work Environment

20 points

The work environment includes exposure to cold temperatures of coolers, which are 25 to 30 degrees Fahrenheit (and on occasion for short periods at subzero temperatures) and other processing areas: the high noise levels of industrial processing equipment; the risks of forklifts, meat hooks and/or meat products and other items moving or falling; slippery floors and stairs; and the risks of cutting and sawing equipment.

TOTAL POINTS - 1515 - GS-7